

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The present request is submitted in response to the final Office Action dated March 12, 2008, which set a three-month period for response, making this amendment due by June 12, 2008.

Claims 14, 18-19, and 22-25 are pending in the application.

In the final Office Action, claims 17 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 14, 18-20 and 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,629,026 to Rosell. Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosell in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,029,334 to Ozeki.

In the present amendment, claims 17 and 26 have been canceled, thus obviating the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph.

Turning now to the new grounds for the substantive rejection of the pending claims, the Applicants respectfully disagree that the cited patent to Rosell anticipates or renders obvious the subject matter of claim 14.

More specifically, Rosell does not disclose a steering mechanism in which the rack is rigidly fixed to the cylinder. In Rosell, the rack clearly is movable relative to the cylinder. While Rosell mentions tilting, movement in the axial direction is also possible because the elastic discs 34 allow this movement.

In addition, the rack is guided at its ends at 31 under two rollers or bolts 54. These bolts form a bearing which allows for some sliding movement, but only in the

axial direction. It appears to be impossible to tilt the rack in these gearings in the tangential direction of the cylinder.

Claim 14 has been amended to add the features of claim 20, which was canceled, so that claim 14 is now directed to the embodiment shown in Figs. 3 and 4. This embodiment differs from the device shown in Rosell, in that the pinion engages the rack in a position that is offset from the center of the device.

The device as defined in amended claim 14 offers a distinct advantage over the cited art, specifically, the ability to mount the steering device in a central position in the vehicle and to connect the steering shaft in a very direct manner without having to deflect the shaft towards the center line of the vehicles, as would be necessary with the steering gear disclosed in Rosell.

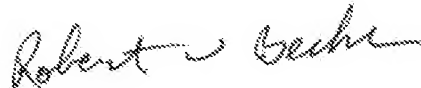
The Applicants further submit that the Rosell device would not be suitable for use with a pinion that is offset from the center of the device, as there is no space available to support an extended rack to the sides of the cylinder.

Because amended claim 14 includes features which are not disclosed by Rosell, the rejection under Section 102 must be withdrawn. It is respectfully submitted that Rosell is not a proper reference under either MPEP section 2131 or section 2143.03, since the reference does not teach or suggest every element of the claim.

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The application in its amended state is believed to be in condition for allowance. Action to this end is courteously solicited. However, should the Examiner have any comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert W. Becker".

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